

Assembly Bill No. 1121

CHAPTER 651

An act to amend, repeal, and add Sections 1277 and 1278 of the Code of Civil Procedure, and to add Section 103426 to, the Health and Safety Code, relating to gender identity.

[Approved by Governor October 8, 2013. Filed with
Secretary of State October 8, 2013.]

LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL'S DIGEST

AB 1121, Atkins. Gender identity: petition for change of name.

Existing law sets forth the requirements and procedures for proceedings commenced by the filing of a petition for a change of name. Existing law authorizes a court to grant the petition without a hearing if no written objection to the change of name is timely filed and imposes publication requirements with respect to the court hearing of the change of name petition.

This bill would provide that if a petition for a change of name is sought to conform the petitioner's name to his or her gender identity, and no timely objection is filed, the court is required to grant the petition without a hearing. The bill would exempt the petition action from a specified publication requirement. The bill would authorize a court, at the request of the petitioner to, issue an order reciting the name of the petitioner as a result of the court's granting of the petition. The bill would make these provisions operative on July 1, 2014.

Existing law authorizes a person to file a petition with the superior court in any county to seek a judgment recognizing a change of gender whenever that person has undergone clinically appropriate treatment for the purpose of gender transition. Existing law requires that if requested, the judgment include an order that a new birth certificate be prepared to reflect the change of gender and any change of name. Existing law requires that the State Registrar transmit a certified copy of a birth certificate newly established pursuant to these provisions.

This bill would require the State Registrar to issue a new birth certificate reflecting a change of sex without a court order for any person born in the state who has undergone clinically appropriate treatment for the purpose of gender transition and submits to the State Registrar an affidavit of a physician attesting that the person has undergone that treatment, as specified. Upon receipt of the documentation and a prescribed fee, the State Registrar would be required to establish a new birth certificate reflecting the person's sex and any change of name, if applicable.

The people of the State of California do enact as follows:

SECTION 1. Section 1277 of the Code of Civil Procedure is amended to read:

1277. (a) If a proceeding for a change of name is commenced by the filing of a petition, except as provided in subdivisions (b), (c), and (e), the court shall thereupon make an order reciting the filing of the petition, the name of the person by whom it is filed, and the name proposed. The order shall direct all persons interested in the matter to appear before the court at a time and place specified, which shall be not less than six nor more than 12 weeks from the time of making the order, unless the court orders a different time, to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted. The order shall direct all persons interested in the matter to make known any objection that they may have to the granting of the petition for change of name by filing a written objection, which includes the reasons for the objection, with the court at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and by appearing in court at the hearing to show cause why the petition for change of name should not be granted. The order shall state that, if no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing.

A copy of the order to show cause shall be published pursuant to Section 6064 of the Government Code in a newspaper of general circulation to be designated in the order published in the county. If no newspaper of general circulation is published in the county, a copy of the order to show cause shall be posted by the clerk of the court in three of the most public places in the county in which the court is located, for a like period. Proof shall be made to the satisfaction of the court of this publication or posting, at the time of the hearing of the application.

Four weekly publications shall be sufficient publication of the order to show cause. If the order is published in a daily newspaper, publication once a week for four successive weeks shall be sufficient.

If a petition has been filed for a minor by a parent and the other parent, if living, does not join in consenting thereto, the petitioner shall cause, not less than 30 days prior to the hearing, to be served notice of the time and place of the hearing or a copy of the order to show cause on the other parent pursuant to Section 413.10, 414.10, 415.10, or 415.40. If notice of the hearing cannot reasonably be accomplished pursuant to Section 415.10 or 415.40, the court may order that notice be given in a manner that the court determines is reasonably calculated to give actual notice to the nonconsenting parent. In that case, if the court determines that notice by publication is reasonably calculated to give actual notice to the nonconsenting parent, the court may determine that publication of the order to show cause pursuant to this subdivision is sufficient notice to the nonconsenting parent.

(b) (1) If the petition for a change of name alleges a reason or circumstance described in paragraph (2), and the petitioner is a participant in the address confidentiality program created pursuant to Chapter 3.1 (commencing with Section 6205) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government

Code, the action for a change of name is exempt from the requirement for publication of the order to show cause under subdivision (a), and the petition and the order of the court shall, in lieu of reciting the proposed name, indicate that the proposed name is confidential and will be on file with the Secretary of State pursuant to the provisions of the address confidentiality program.

(2) The procedure described in paragraph (1) applies to petitions alleging any of the following reasons or circumstances:

(A) To avoid domestic violence, as defined in Section 6211 of the Family Code.

(B) To avoid stalking, as defined in Section 646.9 of the Penal Code.

(C) The petitioner is, or is filing on behalf of, a victim of sexual assault, as defined in Section 1036.2 of the Evidence Code.

(3) For any petition under this subdivision, the current legal name of the petitioner shall be kept confidential by the court and shall not be published or posted in the court's calendars, indexes, or register of actions, as required by Article 7 (commencing with Section 69840) of Chapter 5 of Title 8 of the Government Code, or by any means or in any public forum, including a hardcopy or an electronic copy, or any other type of public media or display.

(4) (A) A petitioner may request that the court file the petition and any other papers associated with the proceeding under seal. The court may consider the request at the same time as the petition for name change, and may grant the request in any case in which the court finds that all of the following factors apply:

(i) There exists an overriding interest that overcomes the right of public access to the record.

(ii) The overriding interest supports sealing the record.

(iii) A substantial probability exists that the overriding interest will be prejudiced if the record is not sealed.

(iv) The proposed order to seal the records is narrowly tailored.

(v) No less restrictive means exist to achieve the overriding interest.

(B) On or before January 1, 2010, the Judicial Council shall develop rules of court and forms consistent with the requirements of this paragraph.

(c) A proceeding for a change of name for a witness participating in the state Witness Protection Program established by Title 7.5 (commencing with Section 14020) of Part 4 of the Penal Code who has been approved for the change of name by the program is exempt from the requirement for publication of the order to show cause under subdivision (a).

(d) If application for change of name is brought as part of an action under the Uniform Parentage Act (Part 3 (commencing with Section 7600) of Division 12 of the Family Code), whether as part of a petition or cross-complaint or as a separate order to show cause in a pending action thereunder, service of the application shall be made upon all other parties to the action in a like manner as prescribed for the service of a summons, as is set forth in Article 3 (commencing with Section 415.10) of Chapter 4 of Title 5 of Part 2. Upon the setting of a hearing on the issue, notice of the hearing shall be given to all parties in the action in a like manner and within

the time limits prescribed generally for the type of hearing (whether trial or order to show cause) at which the issue of the change of name is to be decided.

(e) If a guardian files a petition to change the name of his or her minor ward pursuant to Section 1276:

(1) The guardian shall provide notice of the hearing to any living parent of the minor by personal service at least 30 days prior to the hearing.

(2) If either or both parents are deceased or cannot be located, the guardian shall cause, not less than 30 days prior to the hearing, to be served a notice of the time and place of the hearing or a copy of the order to show cause on the child's grandparents, if living, pursuant to Section 413.10, 414.10, 415.10, or 415.40.

(f) This section shall remain in effect only until July 1, 2014, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before July 1, 2014, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 2. Section 1277 is added to the Code of Civil Procedure, to read:

1277. (a) (1) If a proceeding for a change of name is commenced by the filing of a petition, except as provided in subdivisions (b), (c), and (e), the court shall thereupon make an order reciting the filing of the petition, the name of the person by whom it is filed, and the name proposed. The order shall direct all persons interested in the matter to appear before the court at a time and place specified, which shall be not less than six nor more than 12 weeks from the time of making the order, unless the court orders a different time, to show cause why the application for change of name should not be granted. The order shall direct all persons interested in the matter to make known any objection that they may have to the granting of the petition for change of name by filing a written objection, which includes the reasons for the objection, with the court at least two court days before the matter is scheduled to be heard and by appearing in court at the hearing to show cause why the petition for change of name should not be granted. The order shall state that, if no written objection is timely filed, the court may grant the petition without a hearing. If the petition seeks to conform the petitioner's name to his or her gender identity and no objection is timely filed, the court shall grant the petition without a hearing.

(2) A copy of the order to show cause shall be published pursuant to Section 6064 of the Government Code in a newspaper of general circulation to be designated in the order published in the county. If no newspaper of general circulation is published in the county, a copy of the order to show cause shall be posted by the clerk of the court in three of the most public places in the county in which the court is located, for a like period. Proof shall be made to the satisfaction of the court of this publication or posting, at the time of the hearing of the application.

(3) Four weekly publications shall be sufficient publication of the order to show cause. If the order is published in a daily newspaper, publication once a week for four successive weeks shall be sufficient.

(4) If a petition has been filed for a minor by a parent and the other parent, if living, does not join in consenting thereto, the petitioner shall cause, not

less than 30 days prior to the hearing, to be served notice of the time and place of the hearing or a copy of the order to show cause on the other parent pursuant to Section 413.10, 414.10, 415.10, or 415.40. If notice of the hearing cannot reasonably be accomplished pursuant to Section 415.10 or 415.40, the court may order that notice be given in a manner that the court determines is reasonably calculated to give actual notice to the nonconsenting parent. In that case, if the court determines that notice by publication is reasonably calculated to give actual notice to the nonconsenting parent, the court may determine that publication of the order to show cause pursuant to this subdivision is sufficient notice to the nonconsenting parent.

(5) If the petition for a change of name is sought in order to conform the petitioner's name to his or her gender identity, the action for a change of name is exempt from the requirement for publication of the order to show cause under this subdivision.

(b) (1) If the petition for a change of name alleges a reason or circumstance described in paragraph (2), and the petitioner is a participant in the address confidentiality program created pursuant to Chapter 3.1 (commencing with Section 6205) of Division 7 of Title 1 of the Government Code, the action for a change of name is exempt from the requirement for publication of the order to show cause under subdivision (a), and the petition and the order of the court shall, in lieu of reciting the proposed name, indicate that the proposed name is confidential and will be on file with the Secretary of State pursuant to the provisions of the address confidentiality program.

(2) The procedure described in paragraph (1) applies to petitions alleging any of the following reasons or circumstances:

(A) To avoid domestic violence, as defined in Section 6211 of the Family Code.

(B) To avoid stalking, as defined in Section 646.9 of the Penal Code.

(C) The petitioner is, or is filing on behalf of, a victim of sexual assault, as defined in Section 1036.2 of the Evidence Code.

(3) For any petition under this subdivision, the current legal name of the petitioner shall be kept confidential by the court and shall not be published or posted in the court's calendars, indexes, or register of actions, as required by Article 7 (commencing with Section 69840) of Chapter 5 of Title 8 of the Government Code, or by any means or in any public forum, including a hardcopy or an electronic copy, or any other type of public media or display.

(4) Notwithstanding paragraph (3), the court may, at the request of the petitioner, issue an order reciting the name of the petitioner at the time of the filing of the petition and the new legal name of the petitioner as a result of the court's granting of the petition.

(5) A petitioner may request that the court file the petition and any other papers associated with the proceeding under seal. The court may consider the request at the same time as the petition for name change, and may grant the request in any case in which the court finds that all of the following factors apply:

(A) There exists an overriding interest that overcomes the right of public access to the record.

(B) The overriding interest supports sealing the record.

(C) A substantial probability exists that the overriding interest will be prejudiced if the record is not sealed.

(D) The proposed order to seal the records is narrowly tailored.

(E) No less restrictive means exist to achieve the overriding interest.

(c) A proceeding for a change of name for a witness participating in the state Witness Protection Program established by Title 7.5 (commencing with Section 14020) of Part 4 of the Penal Code who has been approved for the change of name by the program is exempt from the requirement for publication of the order to show cause under subdivision (a).

(d) If application for change of name is brought as part of an action under the Uniform Parentage Act (Part 3 (commencing with Section 7600) of Division 12 of the Family Code), whether as part of a petition or cross-complaint or as a separate order to show cause in a pending action thereunder, service of the application shall be made upon all other parties to the action in a like manner as prescribed for the service of a summons, as is set forth in Article 3 (commencing with Section 415.10) of Chapter 4 of Title 5 of Part 2. Upon the setting of a hearing on the issue, notice of the hearing shall be given to all parties in the action in a like manner and within the time limits prescribed generally for the type of hearing (whether trial or order to show cause) at which the issue of the change of name is to be decided.

(e) If a guardian files a petition to change the name of his or her minor ward pursuant to Section 1276:

(1) The guardian shall provide notice of the hearing to any living parent of the minor by personal service at least 30 days prior to the hearing.

(2) If either or both parents are deceased or cannot be located, the guardian shall cause, not less than 30 days prior to the hearing, to be served a notice of the time and place of the hearing or a copy of the order to show cause on the child's grandparents, if living, pursuant to Section 413.10, 414.10, 415.10, or 415.40.

(f) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2014.

SEC. 3. Section 1278 of the Code of Civil Procedure is amended to read:

1278. (a) Except as provided in subdivisions (c) and (d), the petition or application shall be heard at the time designated by the court, only if objections are filed by any person who can, in those objections, show to the court good reason against the change of name. At the hearing, the court may examine on oath any of the petitioners, remonstrants, or other persons touching the petition or application, and may make an order changing the name, or dismissing the petition or application, as to the court may seem right and proper.

If no objection is filed at least two court days before the date set for hearing, the court may, without hearing, enter the order that the change of name is granted.

(b) If the provisions of subdivision (b) of Section 1277 apply, the court shall not disclose the proposed name unless the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the allegations of domestic violence or stalking are false.

(c) If the application for a change of name is brought as part of an action under the Uniform Parentage Act (Part 3 (commencing with Section 7600) of Division 12 of the Family Code), the hearing on the issue of the change of name shall be conducted pursuant to statutes and rules of court governing those proceedings, whether the hearing is conducted upon an order to show cause or upon trial.

(d) If the petition for a change of name is filed by a guardian on behalf of a minor ward, the court shall first find that the ward is likely to remain in the guardian's care until the age of majority and that the ward is not likely to be returned to the custody of his or her parents. Upon making those findings, the court shall consider the petition and may grant the petition only if it finds that the proposed name change is in the best interest of the child.

(e) This section shall remain in effect only until July 1, 2014, and as of that date is repealed, unless a later enacted statute, that is enacted before July 1, 2014, deletes or extends that date.

SEC. 4. Section 1278 is added to the Code of Civil Procedure, to read:

1278. (a) (1) Except as provided in subdivisions (c) and (d), the petition or application shall be heard at the time designated by the court, only if objections are filed by a person who can, in those objections, show to the court good reason against the change of name. At the hearing, the court may examine on oath any of the petitioners, remonstrants, or other persons touching the petition or application, and may make an order changing the name, or dismissing the petition or application, as the court may seem right and proper.

(2) If no objection is filed at least two court days before the date set for hearing, the court may, without hearing, enter the order that the change of name is granted. If the petition seeks to conform the petitioner's name to his or her gender identity and no objection is timely filed, the court shall grant the petition without a hearing.

(b) If the provisions of subdivision (b) of Section 1277 apply, the court shall not disclose the proposed name unless the court finds by clear and convincing evidence that the allegations of domestic violence, stalking, sexual assault, or gender identity in the petition are false.

(c) If the application for a change of name is brought as part of an action under the Uniform Parentage Act (Part 3 (commencing with Section 7600) of Division 12 of the Family Code), the hearing on the issue of the change of name shall be conducted pursuant to statutes and rules of court governing those proceedings, whether the hearing is conducted upon an order to show cause or upon trial.

(d) If the petition for a change of name is filed by a guardian on behalf of a minor ward, the court shall first find that the ward is likely to remain in the guardian's care until the age of majority and that the ward is not likely

to be returned to the custody of his or her parents. Upon making those findings, the court shall consider the petition and may grant the petition only if it finds that the proposed name change is in the best interest of the child.

(e) This section shall become operative on July 1, 2014.

SEC. 5. Section 103426 is added to the Health and Safety Code, to read:

103426. The State Registrar shall issue a new birth certificate reflecting a change of sex without a court order for any person born in this state who has undergone clinically appropriate treatment for the purpose of gender transition and submits directly to the State Registrar the affidavit described in subdivision (a) of Section 103430 that includes the signature and physician license number of a licensed physician. Upon receipt of the documentation and the fee prescribed by Section 103725, the State Registrar shall establish a new birth certificate reflecting the person's correct sex and any change in name, if accompanied by a court order for a change of name.